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Building a Pacific Community - Winston Lord, Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs

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Considering that recent speakers here have included Dan Quayle, with his legendary Murphy Brown speech, the incomparable Ambassador Shirley Temple Black, and the controversial Vladimir Zhirinovsky, my appearance today augurs the Chinese New Year—namely, the Year of the Boar. Mr. President, let me thank you and the Commonwealth Club of California for your invitation and for your gracious welcome to one of America's pre-eminent forums. I am very pleased to be back here in San Francisco, a city that prides itself as America's Pacific gateway.

A century- and-a-half ago, Richard Henry Dana called this city "the sole emporium of a new world, the awakening Pacific." What better place than California—a state with enduring economic, political, and ancestral ties to the region, a state that cherishes the diversity of its own citizens—to evoke America's place in the Pacific Community. Skeptics ask, is there a Pacific Community? The honest answer is, not yet. But will one emerge over time?

Clearly, building such a community will take persistence and patience. We cannot force its definition; nor should we forfeit our differences. We will not see—and we do not seek—the cohesion of the smaller, more homogeneous Europe. The diversity of the Asia-Pacific region is a reality we recognize and respect. Its distinctions will be a major source for the region's future dynamism. Nevertheless, the contours of commonality are surfacing in the Pacific.

Trade is linking economies, telecommunications are transcending borders, and transportation is shrinking distances. The nations of the Asia-Pacific region trade more intensively among themselves than those of Europe. Business people are spurring regional integration. Diplomats are strengthening regional institutions. These realities lend substance to President Clinton's vision of a Pacific Community of shared prosperity, security, and freedom. Given the huge canvas of Asian-Pacific issues and the limits of time, I must paint in broad brush strokes the policies of this Administration. January 1993 When the Clinton Administration took office in January 1993, it was the first to confront head-on the post-Cold War world with all its advantages and ambiguities. On this uncharted terrain the great promise of the Pacific clearly stood out. You need no reminder of this region's importance or prospects. It is home to the fastest growing economies, the most lucrative for American exports and jobs.

Our trade across the Pacific is more than half again as large as that across the Atlantic. U.S. exports account for 21/2 million American jobs. The potential is awesome—to take just one example, the huge Asian infrastructure projects looming ahead for the rest of this decade are roughly equivalent to building 15 Santa Monica freeways every day. In a region where the major powers intersect, we have abiding security interests. While we have fought three wars there in the past 50 years, relations among the strongest powers are more stable today than they have been in this century.

The uplifting movement toward freedom around the globe runs strong in Asia, boosted by satellites, cellular phones, and fax machines, and by the universal principle that people do not live by rice alone. Here at home, our population has been shifting toward the Pacific. It is enriched by the influx of Asian-Americans and the contributions they make of good old Confucian—not to mention American—values: education, hard work, and family. But while the great potential of the Pacific has been clear to far-sighted Californians and Americans since the days of Richard Henry Dana, only in recent years has the United States attempted to define its Pacific identity, role, and interests. In so doing, we face three conceptual challenges. First, our national identity still rests heavily on our legacy of Eurocentrism. This central orientation was heightened during the Cold War, shaped by our traditional immigration patterns, security links, and trade flows.

In 1993, this Administration adjusted the national focus, bringing home to the American people the stakes in the Asia-Pacific region and signaling to our regional partners that we would intensify our engagement. That July, the President's first overseas trip was to Tokyo and Seoul where he projected his vision of a Pacific Community. That November, the President elevated the leading regional economic organization, APEC, in Seattle by convening the first summit ever held of Asia-Pacific leaders. By maintaining our forward military presence, promoting American exports, and increasing cabinet-level visits, we reinforced our profile and prospects in the Pacific.

The second conceptual challenge is defining the American role in the new world. What is the proper mix of unilateral and multilateral efforts? American leadership in the Asia- Pacific region, as elsewhere, remains indispensable, but we are increasingly compelled to build a broader consensus as well. By definition, the construction of a Pacific Community is a collective undertaking; no one nation—not the United States, not China, not Japan, not any other Pacific power—should be the sole architect, contractor, or proprietor.

Third, there is the challenge of determining the hierarchy of American interests. We have traditionally promoted security, prosperity, and freedom in our foreign policy, but the Cold War mandated clear priorities. Then, when the Secretary of the Treasury or Commerce came to the President with a trade problem with an ally, the Secretaries of State and Defense, the NSC Advisor, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs would emphasize the imperatives of the era: We needed partners against the Soviet Union, and commercial disputes had to be managed in that context. Then, when we dealt with unsavory regimes we accentuated their anti- communist posture and trod lightly on their human rights performance.

Now those days are over. To be sure—as the North Korean situation reminds us—security remains central, but economic interests are ascendant and the spread of freedom enhances both. In the post-Cold War environment, our fundamental interests remain, but we have a more difficult task in assigning their priorities. Our response to this conceptual challenge is to advance all our enduring interests at once, where possible, in turn, when necessary. We pursue multiple objectives: creating American jobs and freeing political prisoners; gaining military access while gainsaying the caning of an American teenager and the censoring of an American professor; reconciling our bold economic vision with bold demonstrators for freedom; resolving the issue of our missing-in-action and healing the wounds of war; addressing the threat of population explosion and the excesses of population regimentation; controlling heroin; and encouraging human rights.

In some instances, we must make exacting short-term trade- offs, but that is not always the case, and over the long run, I am convinced that our goals of security, prosperity, and liberty are mutually reinforcing. Thus, with a new style of leadership and a new balancing of goals, this Administration set out to move the Asia-Pacific region higher on our international agenda. This journey involves not only cooperation, but engaging the countries of the region on stubborn issues of concern to us.

The confluence of events last spring demonstrated that this was an arduous task. Our trade negotiations with Japan broke down, the MFN debate on China broke out, the nuclear talks with North Korea broke off, and the decibels were high in our human rights debates. What I said then, I hereby repeat. I felt about our policies in Asia the way that Mark Twain felt about Wagner's music: It's not as bad as it sounds! Many of these problems had been festering for years and needed time to resolve.

Moreover, we were making quiet progress on various other fronts: — Building economic cooperation through APEC; — Nurturing new security dialogues; — Moving ahead with Vietnam; — Sustaining Cambodia's democratic struggle; — Shoring up our relations with Australia; and — Elevating our contacts with New Zealand. Today, we have regained momentum in both the reality and the perception of our Asia-Pacific policy. Successes built incrementally over time have converged. We have reached significant trade agreements with Japan. We have pursued comprehensive engagement with China, while strengthening our ties with Taiwan. We have achieved a critical Korean nuclear accord. We have conducted a more modulated dialogue on human rights with the nations of the region.

Last November, the President's and Secretary Christopher's trips to Asia helped to forge APEC's Bogor Declaration calling for free and open trade and investment by the year 2020. Last August, the historic first meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum engaged China, Russia, and Vietnam—along with 15 other countries—in a new security dialogue that promises to parallel APEC on the economic side. At mid-term, how is the Clinton Administration doing in the Pacific? Let me render a perfectly objective assessment. You make up your own report card.

On many issues the only fair grade is incomplete. We struggle in some areas. We face severe tests. I believe, however, that our overall record is solid and faithful to the opportunities in this vast, dynamic region. Prosperity In the economic arena, the challenges in January 1993 were, first, to open up promising, but often protectionist, markets, particularly Japan and China. Our second broader goal was to ensure America's economic place in the Pacific Community. In today's global economy, domestic performance is inextricably tied to full participation in world markets.

Closer economic ties with our Asia-Pacific trading partners is essential to our—and their—growth. Both these challenges—removing barriers and strengthening the Pacific Community's economic ties—will take many years, but we are determined to press ahead, working on four levels: domestic, bilateral, regional, and global.

On the domestic front, clearly we have been getting our own house in order. America is back as a responsible manager of its own economy and a credible leader of the global economy. Ours is marked by steady, robust growth, with low inflation and falling unemployment. The budget deficit has been slashed, companies are leaner and more competitive, and export controls have been loosened. President Clinton and Secretary Christopher have made commercial diplomacy a top foreign policy priority.

Never in my many years in government have I seen talking points for top officials, including in the State Department, so filled with economic and business issues. Bilaterally, we conduct several intensive negotiations. Through the Japan framework talks we have reached a series of important sectoral agreements and promoted macro-economic stimulus in Japan—while admittedly losing the public relations battle. Much more remains to be done, and we will continue our vigorous efforts to open the market. Japan, however sporadically, is moving toward a genuine multi-party system with more competition and consumer votes, and, therefore, openings for foreign suppliers.

Over time, such factors should help ease our economic problems. Still, Japan's trade surpluses are likely to persist for the foreseeable future. Whether our domestic audience will tolerate this while our multifaceted, incremental approach produces more concrete results is a critical question. With China, we have conducted a series of intense economic negotiations. There have been some successes, for example, on textiles. But overall, progress has been slow, as Chinese leaders fear to relax their control or open up their system to foreign competition when the uncertainties of the economy and succession politics inhibit flexibility.

Two weeks ago, we were obliged to threaten retaliation because of egregious pirating of intellectual property rights in China. Another urgent issue is China's desire to become a founding member of the new World Trade Organization. We continue to strongly support China's membership, but its accession must be based on firm commitments to the basic rules and disciplines of the GATT/WTO system. As many other WTO members have stressed, this is an economic question, not the political one which China purports. We have formal dialogues with other economies such as Korea, Thailand, and Taiwan.

We are also engaged in consultations- -individually and collectively—with all six dynamic ASEAN economies. ASEAN, as a whole, is our fourth-largest trading partner and contributes to multilateral trade liberalization through its own free trade area. Bilateral negotiations are often tough, sometimes acrimonious. Therefore, we have approached our economic problems multilaterally as well.

In Seattle, the APEC leaders shaped an economic vision of the Pacific future. In Bogor, they made a commitment to open and free trade by the year 2020, if not sooner. In Osaka next November, they should approve a blueprint. Nothing less than half of the world's GNP and population, and soon half of its trade, is involved. The Bogor declaration is a bold political commitment and economic goal; the benefits for the United States and the entire Pacific Community will be incalculable. I believe it will be a historic achievement and a catalyst for action. Experience shows, whether in Europe or in Southeast Asia, that when a target date is fixed, businesses and governments make anticipatory decisions on investment and trade, and the pace quickens.

This vision must be buttressed by pragmatic building blocks to help the private sector. APEC has already been working to remove barriers, whether in harmonizing customs and standards or drafting investment principles. Thus, we need both—the vision and muscle of political leaders to stimulate the bureaucracies, as well as practical measures to produce immediate progress. APEC is a global building block, not a regional trading bloc. It promotes greater prosperity not only in the area, but everywhere.

We are now in a phase of competitive liberalization around the world with America at the hub of dramatic progress on all three fronts—APEC, the Western Hemisphere movement toward free trade, and the new World Trade Organization. In Seattle, the leaders' vision caught Europe's attention and spurred the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round. In Bogor, the setting of target dates spurred the nations of this hemisphere to do likewise three weeks later at the Miami summit.

Now is unarguably the most seminal period in international economic history since Bretton Woods, and I believe the Clinton Administration will be credited with its decisive leadership. Our engagement in APEC exemplifies the evolving nature of that leadership. When we were the host, we were out front. When Indonesia was the host, we played a calibrated but crucial supporting role, helping to forge a consensus. This year, we will encourage Japan to sustain the momentum generated by Presidents Clinton and Soeharto, and to transform the Bogor commitment into reality. APEC is a core element of our overall policy toward the Asia- Pacific. It is building the networks that are giving definition to a new Pacific Community, and it helps to anchor America in the region, not only in economic terms but also in security and political terms. Let me now turn to those issues.

Security

The security challenges we faced in January 1993 included the persistent Cambodian conflict, the simmering Korean nuclear problem and the regional fears of a revived Middle Kingdom, a remilitarized Japan, a resurgent Russia, or a reduced American presence. In Cambodia, who would have thought—even two years ago— that its truly long suffering people would be where they are today? Who would have thought that nefarious outside influences would be eliminated, whether Vietnamese incursions, Chinese aid, or Thai tolerance of the Khmer Rouge; that almost 400,000 refugees would return from Thailand to Cambodia; that the levels of violence would be dramatically reduced; that despite intimidation and threats, 90% of the population would vote in a free election; that a victorious coalition of parties who had been fighting each other would be cooperating against the Khmer Rouge; that the latter would be suffering large defections and confined to pockets?

Of course there are huge problems, ranging from poverty to corruption, from political intrigue to an army in need of reform. But the brave Cambodian people have come a very long way from the "killing fields," thanks, above all, to their courage, as well as to a remarkably successful United Nations operation, broad international support, and a steady American policy. We and the international community owe it to the Cambodian people who have survived humanity's most inhuman horrors to stay the course. Regional security demands no less.

As recent events have vividly reminded us, the Korean Peninsula represents the most critical security challenge in Asia, if not the world. That Bobby Hall's release took too long testifies to the legacy of nearly 50 years of confrontation across the last remaining frontier of the Cold War. Without the nuclear framework agreement and its intense dialogue with North Korea, he might not be free today. The nuclear accord itself, of course, will receive intense scrutiny—as it should—during the coming weeks and months. We are confident that the more the Congress and the country examine the agreement, the more they will share our firm judgment that it fulfills America's goals of promoting regional stability and curbing nuclear proliferation. In this accord we address the past, present, and future nuclear threats posed by North Korea. The past involves perhaps one nuclear device.

North Korea has agreed to allow inspections—including, if necessary, taking samples from the radioactive waste storage sites, which the IAEA believes will shed light on how much plutonium North Korea produced in 1989-91. Pyongyang steadfastly refused the idea of such inspections until the last couple of weeks of negotiations. Granted, clarification of the past is scheduled a few years later than we would have liked, but these sites are not going anywhere. They are under tight surveillance, and murky history must be clarified before key nuclear components for lightwater reactors are provided to North Korea. We judged that this delay was outweighed by the opportunity to deal effectively with the present and future. North Korea was on the verge of producing large amounts of weapons- grade plutonium, and, therefore, the capability of building and selling to others dozens of nuclear weapons every year. The Agreed Framework obliges North Korea to freeze its nuclear capacity.

So far it has done so. It has shut down its small nuclear reactor. It has sealed its reprocessing facility; the spent fuel rods will be safely encased and eventually shipped out. It has halted construction on its two large reactors. All of this has been verified by IAEA inspections which continue, along with our surveillance. North Korea has reversed itself and remains a party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

As for the future, North Korea will dismantle its entire program, and with outside help, substitute one more resistant to proliferation. Moreover, if it faithfully implements the accord, North Korea will be progressively integrated into the region and the world, opening up its system and opening the way toward greater stability in Northeast Asia. This agreement is not based on trust. In addition to international verification, there are built-in checkpoints along the path of implementation. To gain technical or economic benefits, North Korea must honor reciprocal obligations. Specific leverage will ensure that North Korea derives no advantages that do not also promote regional and global stability.

Moreover, the major financial costs will be borne by the international community, not just by the U.S. Let me erase one shibboleth right now: The provision of fuel oil and lightwater reactors to the North Koreans is not a reward. It compensates modestly for energy North Korea otherwise would be producing with the indigenous nuclear programs it has agreed to abandon. Its indigenous technology was especially dangerous; it produced a great deal of plutonium and not much energy. Pyongyang is forfeiting this program for Western nuclear technology which, under safeguards, can produce more energy, but not material for nuclear weapons.

There is nothing in the NPT that forbids reprocessing under IAEA inspections, and there is nothing remotely in the NPT that requires destruction of one's entire nuclear capability. Thus, North Korea is far exceeding its NPT obligations and, indeed, our original objectives. In short, the Agreed Framework is of major benefit to the United States, to the region, and to the world. Countries everywhere have welcomed it. The alternatives were dubious and dangerous. The accord's critics have a responsibility to present a better alternative—no one has done so. Implementing the Framework will require perseverance by all concerned. We are working closely with South Korea and Japan.

As stipulated in the Framework, the South-North dialogue must be promptly resumed. We expect contacts between Seoul and Pyonyang to develop in rough parallel with steps toward normalization of U.S.-D.P.R.K. relations. The future of the peninsula must be shaped by the Korean people themselves; the Framework can only succeed if there is a climate of civility and pragmatic cooperation between North and South.

Even as we deal with near-term crises, we face longer-term challenges to regional security. How do we build stable constructive relations among the major powers—China, Japan, Russia, and others? How do we ensure that the United States continues to play a pre-eminent role in the Pacific? Virtually every nation in the region wants us to remain engaged for strategic balance. In the past two years, we have reaffirmed our engagement through both words and deeds. It is in our interest to do so—to maintain stability, to support our economic interests, and to bolster our diplomatic position. Our alliance with Japan remains crucial to our common defense and to our military presence in Asia.

On the bilateral front, we have insulated our security ties from our trade frictions. As Secretary Christopher said in Tokyo last year: We cannot realize the full potential of our relationship unless we have harmony and strength among all its elements. We must make our economic and trade links as mutually beneficial as our political and security bonds. Still, with the disappearance of the Soviet threat, the post-Cold War environment, tensions over the commemoration of the end of World War II, and Japan's political change, we cannot be complacent about this critical partnership.

During the coming year, we and the Japanese will systematically examine security issues and reinforce our alliance. We will also demonstrate the breadth of our partnership, from cooperation on peace-keeping and regional conflicts to joint efforts on global issues. With the Chinese, we have followed a policy of comprehensive engagement, seeking progress on a broad agenda of issues through high-level visits and working-level negotiations.

Our strategic goal is to help integrate the Middle Kingdom into the international community, to encourage it to accept both the benefits and the obligations that come with interdependence and cooperation. Meanwhile, we have resumed a dialogue with China's military leaders to enhance regional confidence through greater transparency about China's intentions. With Russia, our global approach of supporting reform and integration includes welcoming it into the Pacific Community. With Vietnam, while the fullest possible accounting for our missing-in-action remains our highest priority, we have important regional security objectives which improved relations will promote.

We will open up liaison offices within a few weeks and envision further progress as Vietnamese cooperation on MIAs continues. With relatively stable relations among the major nations in Asia, an unprecedented opportunity exists to build a more constructive pattern for the coming century. Thus, the Administration has explored new multilateral security dialogues in Asia. They will supplement, but not supplant, our alliances and forward military presence which we rigorously preserve. Working with ASEAN and other friends, the U.S. has supported the establishment of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the Pacific's first broadly based, consultative body concerned with security issues. In contrast to Cold War collective arrangements, the ARF is an inclusive group not directed against any country or bloc.

The first historic meeting was in July 1994, and included the ASEAN countries, the U.S., Canada, Japan, Korea, Australia, and New Zealand, as well as former adversaries China, Russia, and Vietnam. We believe the ARF can play an important role in conveying governments' intentions, easing tensions, promoting transparency, developing confidence, con- straining arms races, and cultivating habits of consultation and cooperation on security issues. Northeast Asia is both the area where great powers have clashed historically and the locus of the region's most urgent security challenges. Accordingly, there is a strong need for a sub-regional security dialogue.

In consultations with others we are laying the groundwork for such a forum through a series of mixed government/ academic conferences on Northeast Asian Security with Japan, South Korea, China, and Russia. North Korea has been invited but has not yet participated beyond a preparatory meeting. The other five countries hope it will now join. As President Clinton said in Korea: These dialogues can ensure that the end of the Cold War does not provide an opening for regional rivalries, chaos, and arms races. They can build a foundation for our shared security well into the 21st century. Freedom Finally, there is the goal of freedom.

As we looked at the Asian landscape in January 1993, we saw that many countries- -as in the rest of the world— were moving toward more open societies and accountable governments. At the same time, surely, several key regimes remained caught in a time warp of repression. Promoting freedom while balancing other objectives is the most complex challenge—conceptually and politically—that we face. It is a quest in which we get the least international support. Our allies endorse human rights and democracy in principle, but they are often content to hold our coat and take the business contracts as we take the political heat.

False prophets claim a contest of values between the United States, or the West, and an Asian monolith. They assert that Asians do not share universal aspirations for individual rights. Let them tell that to the Japanese, Australians, New Zealanders, Filipinos, Thai, Koreans, and Taiwanese. Let them tell that to Cambodians crossing minefields or Mongolians crossing deserts to vote. I think their electorates and elected leaders would reject the notion that human rights are uniquely Western, or the implication that autocracy is intrinsically Asian. Most would agree with President Kim of South Korea that, "respect for human dignity, plural democracy, and free market economics have firmly taken root as universal values," or with Burma's opposition leader, Aung San Suu Kyi: If ideas and beliefs were denied validity outside the cultural bounds of their origin, Buddhism would be confined to North India, Christianity to a narrow tract in the Middle East, and Islam to Arabia.

What is our message to Asians? We are not on a crusade. We are not trying to impose our form of society or ideals. Each country must find its own way, consistent with history and culture. But international obligations to which countries have subscribed should be fulfilled. No government should violate the core value of human dignity, as articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Each nation's citizens should have the chance to participate in the decisions that affect their lives, and the governments they elect should not be overturned by force. Many Asians have devoted their lives, and given their lives, for these values. Americans are bound to respect them.

Moreover, we appeal to countries' self-interest. Experience teaches that sustained economic development is more likely where government policies are transparent, where courts provide due process, where uncensored newspapers are free to expose corruption and to debate economic policy, and where business people can make independent decisions with free access to information. Economic rights granted by authoritarians can as easily be taken away. The foundation of open economies—rights that protect contracts, property, and patents—must be guaranteed by the rule of law.

The reality of Japan, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Taiwan tells us that accountable government is the bedrock of stability and prosperity. The reality of Burma and North Korea tells us that repression entrenches poverty. What is our message to Americans? The defense of liberty is not merely an idealistic sojourn. Enlarging freedom serves our concrete national designs as well.

The greatest threats to our security, and to Asia's, have long come from governments that flout the rule of law at home and reject the rule of international law abroad. In 353 wars fought since 1819, not a single one has been between two established democracies.* [* R.J. Rummel, Death by Government, Transaction Publishers, New Jersey, 1994.]

Any nation that harbors refugees knows that instability within nations spills across borders. Because democracy provides an outlet for airing dissent and a process for building consensus, it is also a force for internal peace. Thailand's Prime Minister Chuan put it well when he said that "no one asks me about coups any more since we've been able to make democracy work."

We will continue to champion human and labor rights in Asia without arrogance or apology. We will do so where we have friendly relations—as the President did in Indonesia in his meeting with President Soeharto. We will do so where our interest in stemming the drug trade goes hand-in-hand with our interest in accountable government—as it does in Burma. And we will do so where we have an interest in positive engagement on many critical world issues—as we have in China. Beijing is in a self-confident, increasingly nationalistic mood, which magnifies differences on this issue and many others.

The Chinese perceive their approach of economic reform and political repression in sharp, favorable contrast to the Russian model. Their economy has boomed in recent years. Their diplomacy has snared eager suitors since Tiananmen Square. At the same time, Chinese officials face new uncertainty. They are hesitating between two courses: going forward with economic reforms at the risk of hurting entrenched interests and fueling unemployment, or emphasizing stability at the risk of stagnation and popular discontent. China's leaders are also jockeying for position in a succession period.

No would-be leader wants to look soft on foreigners or weak on sensitive issues like human rights or irresolute on sovereignty issues like Tibet, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. Yet, China genuinely seeks good relations with the United States, whom they view as the only "superpower." They need us both to ensure economic growth and maintain geostrategic balance. Beijing wants to offset the strength of Japan. And despite the near-term improvement in relations with Moscow, it continues to fear a resurgent Russian nationalism.

Against this backdrop we make progress wherever we can. We have seen cooperation, or at least parallel policies, in such areas as the Korean nuclear issue, Cambodia, some trade areas, drugs, and alien smuggling. This gives us a broader context within which to slug away at the more difficult, sensitive issues like human rights, non-proliferation, and other economic problems.

In our China policy—as in a few others—we have made some course corrections. Last spring, we concluded that linking MFN trade status to human rights had exhausted its utility; that we needed to serve our goals by other means. That decision, plus a balanced approach toward Indonesia, plus our willingness to test the repressive Burmese regime through results-oriented dialogue, have led some domestic constituencies to think we are relaxing our dedication to human rights. That is emphatically untrue.

Our goals remain constant. In some instances we have shifted our tactics. While continuing bilateral approaches, we seek to generate more multilateral efforts and buttress the efforts of non- governmental organizations. While foreign aid is generally less relevant to the dynamic Asian region than others, selective assistance for those struggling for democracy in Cambodia and Mongolia is imperative.

The President remains as committed as ever to the pursuit of freedom. No other government comes close to raising human rights as often and as forcefully as ours. As for the argument that repression is needed for stability, consider a Chinese tale of the third century B.C. which told of a brutal king who suffered disaster by silencing dissenters. As the tale relates, stopping up the mouths of the people is more dangerous than stopping up a river. When a river is blocked and then breaks through, many persons are bound to be injured. And it is the same with the people. Therefore, one who desires to control a river will leave an opening where the water can be drawn off.

And one who governs the people should do likewise, encouraging them to speak. In sum, the fostering of liberty often involves a complex, controversial balancing act. On this long journey we can take heart that—thanks to technology and self-interest and human nature—history is on the side of freedom. A final word about some global issues that crowd onto our agenda toward Asia as they are around the world. They transcend boundaries and ideologies and require multilateral solutions.

With half the world's population and rapid growth exerting great pressure on resources and infrastructure, the Asia-Pacific landscape features glaring examples of problems that clog its economic expansion and undercut its quality of life—the flow of narcotics and the flow of refugees, the spread of crime and the spread of AIDS, the degradation of the environment from coal burning in Northeast Asia to the ravaging of forests in Southeast Asia, to the depletion of fish stocks in the South Pacific. Traffic jams everywhere in the region make California expressways look like—expressways!

This Administration tackles these problems bilaterally, regionally, and globally. We have created common agendas on these new issues with Japan and other countries, including soon, we hope, with China. Regionally, we are pointing to the relevance of environmental to economic issues in APEC. Globally, we have launched a series of U.S. initiatives, on global warming, a comprehensive test ban treaty, biodiversity, and coral reefs.

We took a leadership role in the Rio environmental conference and the Cairo population conference and in a few months will do so at the United Nations Conference on Women in Beijing. Conclusion As we move this year toward the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II, we will once again honor those who died fighting for a better world. America will not forget. These veterans, and those of the Cold War, made supreme sacrifices—giving our generation a chance to shape a brighter future for our children, a future that is richer, safer, freer.

This vision inspires our journey toward a Pacific Community. To fulfill our aspirations, all the countries of the Asia-Pacific must take part. We will build on common ground, patiently laying the foundations, brick by brick, for a Pacific Community. We will also enlist the region's rich diversity, for it is an enduring source of strength. Broad public and congressional support will be critical for our journey.

A prosperous, strong, and open Asia-Pacific is neither a Republican nor a Democratic cause. While we will see debate and disagreement the next two years, I am optimistic that our foreign policy—and our Pacific quest— will continue to enjoy broad bipartisan support.

In many ways, on both sides of this ocean of opportunity, we have been building the foundations of a Pacific Community for two centuries. The millions of American and Asian workers who depend on each other tell only part of the story; there are countless others—the Asians who have enriched their lives and ours by attending American universities, the Americans who go abroad to change Asia, only to find that Asia changes them, and the millions on the streets of San Francisco and across the land who trace their ancestry to Asia and enhance America. We have much to learn from each other.

We have much to gain from each other in a Pacific Community. In light of the region's importance to American prosperity, security, and freedom, we must. With your help—as well as your counterparts across the ocean—we will. (###)

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